

Editorial

As indicated in an earlier Editorial, it is intended in future issues of the Journal to give the different national ceramic societies in Europe the opportunity to introduce themselves by giving brief accounts of their history, their organisation and their current objectives.

We are pleased therefore to welcome, as the first in this occasional series, a contribution prepared by our colleagues in:

The Belgian Ceramic Society

The births of the Belgian Ceramic Society and the journal *Silicates Industriels—Ceramic Science and Technology* date back as far as 1930. The initiative was taken by the Belgian glass industry, which, sixty years ago, set up a non-profit-making organisation, the 'Revue Belge des Industries Verrières'. After 1932, the remit of this group was extended to include ceramics and enamelling. It adopted the title 'Revue Belge des Industries Verrières, Céramiques et de l'Emaillerie'. This group was split into a limited company in 1939, publishing the journal *Verres et Silicates Industriels*, and a non-profit-making organisation dealing with the promotion of scientific and technological research in the field of industrial silicates. Since then the statutes of these two allied bodies have been amended several times to update them in line with scientific and technological advances as well as with the developing aims and resources of research and industrial production, both in Belgium and abroad. The society and journal assumed their present name following these successive amendments.

From the outset the work of the Belgian Ceramic Society has gradually extended to cover all ceramic materials, this term being used in the American sense of the word. At the same time, the areas covered by articles published in *Silicates Industriels—Ceramic Science and Technology* have diversified accordingly and today cover glass, enamel, cement, concrete, slags, bricks and tiles, traditional ceramics, refractory materials, clay and advanced ceramics. For several years now the journal has enlisted the co-operation of eminent specialists who, as part of an international committee of consultants, continuously monitor the quality of the articles published.

For a long time now the objectives of the Belgian Ceramic Society have been on a fully international scale and the society took an active and enthusiastic part in setting up the European Ceramic Society, of which it is a founder member.

The international interests of the Belgian Ceramic Society have been embodied notably in the organisation of a series of high-level symposia in Belgium, attended by experts from many countries. The subjects tackled have included:

—Slags, scories and wastes	Mons, 1975
—Enhanced value of slags	Mons, 1976
—Sintering	Brussels, 1976
—Cement and concrete admixtures, and improving additives	Mons, 1977
—Non-destructive micro-analysis of glass and ceramics	Brussels, 1977
—Science of materials and energy problems	Brussels, 1977
—New trends in refractory materials	Brussels, 1980
—Slags and blended cements	Mons, 1981
—Electroceramics I	Brussels, 1984
—Firing equipment	Mons, 1986
—Bioceramics	Louvain-la-Neuve, 1986
—Ceramic–ceramic composites I	Mons, 1987
—Electroceramics II	Brussels, 1988
—Ceramic–ceramic composites II	Mons, 1989

Alongside these international symposia, the Belgian Ceramic Society regularly organises specialist conferences at national level and lends its patronage to events staged by other groups, societies or institutes.

The membership of the Belgian Ceramic Society is made up in the first place of some one hundred private individuals. A number of these carry out research work within a large complex situated in Mons, the Belgian Ceramic Research Center, which comprises two closely-linked bodies, the Research Center of the Belgian Ceramic Society (CRIBC) and the Interuniversity National Institute for Silicates, Soils and Materials (INISMa). Other members work either in various university laboratories (Antwerp, Brussels, Leuven, Louvain-la-Neuve, Mons) or research bodies such as the SCK-CFN Materials Development Department at Mol.

Many members pursue careers in a variety of ceramic-related industrial sectors.

To provide some indication of the scale of the industrial ceramics sector in Belgium and its impact on the country at a socio-economic level, it is worth noting that the total turnover of the firms involved is some 2.9 billion (10^9) ecu.

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